

VOLUNTARY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

for the volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York February/March/April 2005 • Volume 5, Issue 1

Why Do We Honor Our Volunteers?

Why do we honor our volunteers? We are often asked this question - especially during the spring time when most of our facility's host their annual volunteer recognition events.

The VA's Voluntary Service program is the largest volunteer program in the federal government. Men and women of all ages bring special skills and knowledge and a desire to explore and learn, as well as help others. Many come with a gift for working directly with patients, while others bring dependability to assignments behind the scenes.

Last year, VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York volunteers provided 455,673 hours of service. Using the Independent Sector rating of a volunteer hour at \$17.19, this equates to more than \$8 million in donated time.

In addition to the hourly value, our more than 4,000 volunteers and their organizations generated \$1.5 million in gifts and donations. These funds and items were put to use in many ways. Some of the funds go to improving the quality-of-life with purchases like newspapers, haircuts, and comfort items. Donated items included wheelchairs, food, and clothing.

The reality is that many of the ways our volunteers make an impact is not replaceable. The value of the VA volunteers' contributions in dollars and cents is only a small part of their total worth. The motivation and dedication to this nation's veteran population is priceless. That is why we honor our volunteers!

An Echo on Taps for May 21 *Help Us Strike the Right Note*

On Saturday, May 21, 2005 hundreds of brass players from across the nation will line up over the 41-mile distance between the Woodlawn National Cemetery in Elmira, NY, and the Bath National Cemetery in Bath, NY. One by one, each bugler will play a rendition of "Taps," creating an "echo" of this musical symbol of military honor between the two sites. Echo Taps will honor those men and women who have served our country as well as raise public awareness about the need for volunteer buglers to play "Taps" at military funerals.

We are looking for buglers and other musicians who can play a brass instrument to participate in Echo Taps. We are hoping to enlist at least 600 volunteers to help us make this a record-breaking event. Anyone can join - your group, organization or school can even sign up for a particular point along the route. If you can't play an instrument, you can still volunteer to help in other ways. Echo Taps will include a closing ceremony at the Bath VA Medical Center.

Please go to the Web site at www.echotaps.org for more information. If you'd like to play or volunteer, you can sign up at the Web site. For additional information or questions, contact **Les Hampton**, Chairman at (607) 937-5619 or (607) 974-4739 or e-mail him at hamptonle@corning.com.



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Network 2 Honored with a Baldrige Quality Award Visit

Every year, the President of the United States awards the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award to four U.S. businesses and health care and educational organizations for their outstanding quality and performance. Candidates are judged in seven areas: leadership, strategic planning, patient and market focus, information and analysis, staff focus, process management and organizational results. The award is designed to encourage businesses and organizations to deliver ever-improving value to customers and improve overall organizational performance.

I am pleased to report that VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York, which includes the Albany, Syracuse, Canandaigua, Buffalo, Batavia and Bath VA Medical Centers, received a site visit for the 2004 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in October. This is the first time any VA or federal agency has received a Baldrige site visit.

The Baldrige site review team visited the Albany, Syracuse and Buffalo VA Medical Centers and several community-based outpatient clinics, the final check before selecting a winner. Although not a first-place winner, the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York was one of just four out of 22 health care organizations that applied for the award to receive a site visit, a special honor in itself.

Sincerely,

William F. Feeley

Network Director



William F. Feeley
Network Director

A New Committee Sets the Stage for CARES

Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Anthony J. Principi has appointed an advisory subcommittee for Canandaigua. The subcommittee will provide a public forum for local communities regarding recommendations for the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) program. CARES was developed to study VA's health care system and its infrastructure. VA's ultimate goal is to provide veterans with 21st-century quality health care in accessible, cost-effective, state-of-the-art facilities.

The subcommittee, one of 17 under the Advisory Committee for the CARES Business Plan Studies, will advise the Secretary about options and recommendations to consider when making his final CARES decision.

The subcommittee members are:

Amo Houghton

Congressman, Local Business Representative
Lawrence Flesh, M.D.

Chief Medical Officer, VA Clinician

Samuel J. Casella

Supervisor, Town of Canandaigua

Helen Sherman

Director, Ontario County Office for the Aging

Daniel T. Hayes, Ph.D.

President, Finger Lakes Community College

George Basher

Director, NYS Division of Veterans Affairs

Earle Gleason

Director, Yates County Veterans Service Agency

James Cody, FACHE

Director, Syracuse VA, and Chairman,
Network 2 Strategic Planning Committee

Ralph Calabrese

Canandaigua Veterans Advisory Council



VOLUNTARY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

The VAVS newsletter has been created for all volunteers and potential volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. This publication is meant to showcase the wonderful work all of our volunteers contribute to VA. Produced by Network 2 Communications Department. Printed by veterans in the Pre-Vocational Apprenticeship Program, Bath VAMC.

Editorial Board: William F. Feeley, Network Director
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Kathleen Hider, Network Communications
Heather Schrader, Editor
Kathleen Laughlin, Design/Layout, Network 2 Design & Print Shop

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Winning

As part of the new newsletter format, we encourage volunteers to submit articles and story ideas for publication. The following is the first submission.

*Guest essay by
Canandaigua volunteer,
Jane McCarthy*



Everybody loves to win. Yet most people go through life trying to avoid losing rather than trying to win...they're afraid to take risks. Or maybe it's just not important to them.

I've always been one who's up for a challenge, but it has to be a challenge of skill, not of chance. No lottery tickets or football pool for me. I've never felt lucky. Maybe that's because I have little faith. What I do have is tremendous confidence in my physical and mental abilities.

The joys of winning became apparent to me at a very early age. The prizes were a great incentive. The real reward though was the sense of self worth I felt. People looked up to me. I was important. I could bask in the glory of the moment. And although that moment was fleeting, I had the memories and the prizes to sustain me.

What is the drive behind the competitive person? Could it be that the way to feel good about yourself is to make someone else look bad? People who are secure in themselves have no need to prove it...no need to be superior. At least I can console myself since I wasn't the type to win at any cost. I never played dirty or stacked the deck. I just let my skills do the talking.

Over the years I amassed an array of awesome prizes. The most unique

was when our newspaper asked teenagers to write an essay giving their thoughts on the line-up of stars performing at the 1959 Michigan State Fair. There were six winners. I was one of them! This was the big time. And the payoff was unreal!

We started out the opening day of the fair riding in a parade in brand new, shiny Corvette convertibles. The signs on the sides of the cars announced to the world that we were winners! At the fair we were pampered and indulged. The feather in our caps came when we got to meet, in person, all the rock and roll stars in Dick Clark's entourage. We had photo sessions with Frankie Avalon, Bobby Rydell, Jan & Dean, and the Coasters and viewed the concert from our special seats.

My competitive spirit has waned as I mature. Probably the biggest reason is I just don't have the energy any longer that it takes to compete. I've come to realize the old adage is true: it's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game. Once in

awhile I still have flashes of the glory days, but it's actually accompanied with a sense of guilt. You see, I never even used to notice the losers. I do now. I'm one of them. As my physical skills succumb to age and the brighter, younger, more driven take over my spot, I'm forced to move over. You know, it really isn't all that bad. I've nothing to prove anymore. Been there, done that. Maybe that's the real sign of a winner...knowing when to quit.

Jane McCarthy has been a volunteer at the Canandaigua VA Medical Center for two years and has accumulated 126 volunteer hours. Disabled in 2000, Jane feels a kinship with hospitalized veterans. Well aware of the isolation and loneliness of illness, she spends time visiting with patients on the nursing home care unit.

A native of Detroit, MI Jane now calls Canandaigua her home. Her career was spent in architectural/engineering design and construction and as a graphic artist.

Comments

If you have any questions, an address correction, story idea, comment, etc. please write to:

Editor, Voluntary Service Newsletter
Network 2 Communications
465 Westfall Road
Rochester, NY 14620

Please be sure to include your phone number with all correspondence.





Spotlight on *Albany*

The **Snack & Chat Cart** promotes nutrition, hydration and socialization by making drinks and snacks more readily available to patients between meals. It's a good opportunity for the nursing home residents to interact socially with volunteers.

Volunteers who missed the **annual mandatory safety training** exhibits in October can still get credit for the training. Stop by the Volunteer Office to pick up a booklet and quiz. This refresher course is mandatory for all employees and volunteers. Volunteer hours are accrued for this training.

CALENDAR CORNER

February

25 - Iwo-Jima Flag Raising Re-Enactment - 9:00 a.m.

Front Circle

Flag raising by the Marine Corps League. Ceremony and breakfast in the auditorium.

Many area veterans who were present on the island at that historic moment will attend. All volunteers are encouraged to attend.

27 - Four Chaplains Brotherhood Award Ceremony - 2:30 p.m.

Chapel

A reception honoring the recipient will be held in the auditorium immediately after the ceremony.

This prestigious community award is sponsored by the Albany Post 105 Jewish War Veterans to honor a citizen whose life of service and devotion to others demonstrates the spirit of the four chaplains who sacrificed their lives on the U.S. Dorchester in 1943.

April

5 - VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:00 p.m.

Auditorium

8 - POW/MIA Recognition Day - 11:00 a.m.

Auditorium

This event recognizes the surviving POWs and their unique contributions to our nation as soldiers and veterans. All are invited.

24 - Volunteer Recognition Ceremony and Dinner - 1:00 p.m.

Holiday Inn on Wolf Road, Colonie

26 - Volunteer Week Social - 10:00 a.m.

Auditorium

Honor and award volunteers who are unable to make the formal dinner.



Snack & Chat volunteers, Louise Kulczycki (center) and Cecelia Collins (right), serve Roland J. Babbit (veteran) a nourishing snack.

Volunteer Opportunities

- Snack & Chat Cart** (weekday mornings): visit and bring nourishment to hospitalized veterans on the 9th floor
- Police Unit Dispatcher** (evening and weekend hours): answer phones, radio dispatch officers, monitor alarm computer, and maintain activity log
- Customer Service:** assist Patient Advocate and Customer Service Coordinator in personal contacts with patients, identifying patients with special needs, and potential problems for staff follow up
- Greeter (5th Floor Clinics):** greet patients as they get off the elevator and direct them to the correct wing for their subspecialty clinic appointment
- Good Neighbor Program** (Albany, Colonie, Delmar, Loudonville, Schenectady and Voorheesville): visit homebound veterans for 1-2 hours each week to provide caregivers a much-needed break
- Volunteer Drivers** (weekday and on-call)
- Office/Clerical Assistance**





Albany (continued)



Members of the New York Air National Guard State Headquarters, Ronald Colasanti, Terri Brew and Noel Adamson donated a 32-inch television to the Community Day Program.

Wish List

- ☐ Canteen Books (for haircuts)
- ☐ Decaf coffee
- ☐ Afghans
- ☐ Pre-paid phone cards
- ☐ Pill containers (with sections for times of the day)
- ☐ Search-a-word activity books
- ☐ Sneakers (mens - all sizes, new only)
- ☐ Denture adhesive
- ☐ Funds for:
 - Replacement vans for transportation program
 - Sending patients to National Rehab Games and Creative Arts Festival
 - Maintaining fish tanks
 - Wheelchairs

Network 2 Volunteer Staff

Albany

Karen Haas, Manager
(518) 626-5506

Stephanie Bonenfant, Specialist
(518) 626-5508

Bath

Susan DeSalvo, Manager
(607) 664-4773

Sis Conrad, Specialist
(607) 664-4772

Richard Conklin, Clerk
(607) 664-4771

Canandaigua

Robin Johnson, Manager
(585) 393-7759

Patti Ciancaglioni, Specialist
(585) 393-7761

Syracuse

Bob Hawes, Manager
(315) 425-4681

Kathy Stepien, Assistant
(315) 425-4315

Western New York (Buffalo and Batavia)

Mark Francis, Manager
(716) 862-8667

Cheryl Boyd, Specialist
(716) 862-8672

Kathleen Martin, Specialist
(585) 344-3330

Kelly Clark, Intern (716) 862-8671

Readership Survey Results

Thanks to all who responded to our readership survey this past summer. We mailed the survey to 3,179 volunteers of the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. One hundred, thirty-six surveys were completed and provided us with some valuable feedback. This is the first issue where we are implementing some of your suggestions and recommendations:

- Adding additional pages to allow more room for photographs and extended articles
- Adding a complete listing of the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York facilities
- Adding a complete listing of all voluntary service staff and their telephone numbers
- Reformatting the publication so each facility has its own "page"
- Encourage comments, address corrections and story ideas
- Solicit articles from volunteers for future issues





Spotlight on *Bath*

DAV Volunteer Transportation Network

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) operate an extensive network of programs. One of the largest of these programs is the DAV Nationwide Volunteer Transportation Network. It is a clear example of a charitable institution and volunteers stepping in to meet a substantial community need.

During fiscal year 2004, the Bath VA Voluntary Services Department raised approximately \$10,000 for the purchase of a third DAV van. Grateful appreciation is extended to DAV Chapter 7 (Bath), DAV Chapter 13 (Elmira) and the many organizations and individuals that contributed to this worthwhile program. A big thank you to our volunteer drivers that annually cover a distance of 55,000 miles to ensure our veterans receive the quality health care they deserve.

National Volunteer Week - April 17-23

A 31-year tradition, National Volunteer Week designates a special time to recognize and celebrate the tremendous efforts of volunteers. Since its inception, presidents, mayors, and other officials have signed proclamations and have participated in this highly visible, nationwide initiative. Volunteer centers, nonprofits, businesses, government agencies, hospitals, faith-based organizations, and schools utilize National Volunteer Week to highlight their own volunteers and support thousands of service projects in the community. The Bath VA Medical Center staff and patients salute our faithful volunteers!

CALENDAR CORNER

February

8 - Annual Mardi Gras Celebration - 1:30 p.m.
Nursing Home Care Unit (Bldg. 78) Dining Room

14-18 - National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week

March

Women's History Month
Displays and schedule of events located in the hospital lobby

17 - St. Patrick's Day Party - 2:00 p.m.
Nursing Home Care Unit (Bldg. 78) Dining Room

April

1 - AMVETS Because We Care Day - 1:30 p.m.
Leisure Room (Bldg. 92)

21 - VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:30 p.m.
Bldg. 92

Wish List

- ☐ Sponsors/Funds for:
 - Recreation Program
 - Bowling
 - Jump Start
 - Birthday Program
 - Emergency Travel
 - Vocational Programs (tuition support, uniforms, and exam fees)
 - Gift Cards (for groceries)
 - National Golden Age Games
 - Health Fitness Trail
- ☐ Canteen Books \$.50 and \$1.00 denominations
- ☐ Craft Kits
- ☐ New socks
- ☐ CDs/Radios
- ☐ Relaxation Tapes
- ☐ Coffee
- ☐ Snacks
- ☐ Phone Cards
- ☐ Duffle Bags
- ☐ Stationary and Stamps
- ☐ Board Games

Volunteer Opportunities

- 👤 Nursing Home: work in small groups for games, arts and crafts, reading, etc.
- 👤 Drivers (Elmira and Medical Center)
- 👤 Clerical
- 👤 Computer Lab
- 👤 Recreation: assist with bingo, games, and off station trips
- 👤 Library of Congress - Veterans History Project
- 👤 Hospital Information Desk





Spotlight on *Canandaigua*

Medical Center Director Retires

W. David Smith, Director Canandaigua VA Medical Center retired on Monday, January 3, 2005.

Mr. Smith's distinguished career with the Department of Veterans Affairs spanned 35 years of federal service. He served as Medical Center Director in Fort Lyon, Colorado and Anchorage, Alaska and served in VA facilities in Manila in the Philippines and in Washington, D.C. For the last six years he served as Medical Center Director for the Canandaigua VA. During those six years he was Director the facility had some of the highest performance outcomes, employee satisfaction and patient satisfaction scores in the nation.

Palliative Care Unit

The Palliative Care (hospice) Unit officially opened its doors with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Tuesday, September 28. The unit occupies a renovated wing of building 7A and includes four units featuring large, private rooms and a home-like setting. Family members can sleep near veterans on a sofa bed in three of the



four rooms and can cook in the unit that has a kitchen. Thanks to the thousands of dollars in donations from volunteers, the rooms are "homey" with special touches of wallpaper, bedding, kitchen appliances and furniture. Volunteers made the quilts and **Janet Ingerick** a nurse on the unit and her sister **Joan Siglin/Scott** created the mural in the hallway.

Volunteer training for Hospice/Palliative Care will be the first four Tuesdays in March (1, 8, 15, 22) from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. in Bldg. 4, Room 218. Attendees must be registered volunteers approved to attend the training. Volunteers must attend all four training sessions. Contact Voluntary Service at (585) 393-7761 to register.

Female Veterans Day Tea

The Annual Female Veterans Day Tea, sponsored by Voluntary Service and the American Legion Auxiliary hosted 40 female veterans. Cookies and gift bags were provided. Women Veterans Program Manager, **Cheryl Knowles** provided a presentation and film and **Nancy Gross**, Veterans Service Center answered questions and provided handouts on enrollment and eligibility.

Wish List

- ☐ Sponsors/funds for:
 - Luncheons, pizza parties, trips
 - Wheelchair van
- ☐ Tickets to sporting events and outings
- ☐ Styrofoam plates, bowls, cups; napkins and plastic dinnerware
- ☐ Personal care items (shampoo, shaving cream, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, lotion, new socks and underwear, etc.)
- ☐ Gift certificates for Wal-Mart, Tops, Wegmans, pizza, McDonalds, Wendy's, movies, etc.
- ☐ Postage stamps
- ☐ Restaurant type, stainless steel oven/stove
- ☐ Non perishable foods
- ☐ Wallets
- ☐ Prepaid phone cards
- ☐ Slippers with rubber/leather soles
- ☐ T-shirts
- ☐ Men's white socks
- ☐ New underwear (mens and womens)
- ☐ Women's pajamas and robes
- ☐ Garden with indoor plants
- ☐ Fish tank
- ☐ Wood working materials
- ☐ Artist to do mural on walls
- ☐ Gift certificates for zoo and specialty outings



Canandaigua (continued)

Acting Canandaigua VA Medical Center Director Selected

Robert W. Ratliff, Ph.D.,
FACHE has been selected as the Acting Canandaigua VA Medical Center Director effective January 10, 2005. He is currently the Deputy Director of the Central Texas Veterans Health Care System, one of the largest VA health care systems in the country with an annual budget of over \$325 million and nearly 2,700 employees.

Dr. Ratliff is a seasoned VA leader holding a number of key positions and garnering numerous national awards throughout his 24-year career with the Department of Veterans Affairs. He started his VA career in 1979 as a Pharmacist at the VA Medical Center

in San Diego, California. From 1986 to 1990 he served as Chief of Pharmacy at Waco, Texas. After completing the VA's Associate Director Trainee program in 1991 he served as Associate Director for VA Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee until 2000 when he was selected as Associate Director for the newly merged VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System.

Dr. Ratliff holds a Bachelor's Degree in Pharmacy, and a Diploma in Health Care Administration from the Academy of Health Sciences, U.S. Army, Fort Sam Houston, Texas; a Master of Science Degree in Health Care Administration from Texas State

University; and a Ph.D. in Health Education from Texas A & M University. He has attended Leadership VA, serves on the Graduate Healthcare Administrative Training Program Board, is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives, and a member of the Association of Military Surgeons of the U.S.

This year Dr. Ratliff was named Outstanding Alumni for 2004 from Texas State University and receiving the Allen G. Herkimer Award from Texas State University. Under his leadership the VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System received the Vice President's Hammer and Scissor Award for improvements and innovations in health care and received a VA National Patient Safety Award. Dr. Ratliff has served as an active member on countless national and community committees and has been published in several journals.

CALENDAR CORNER

February

9 - VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:30 p.m.
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

10 - Decorating Day in Preparation for National Salute Week - 9:30 a.m.
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

13-19 - National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week

14 - Valentine Distribution/Ward Visitation - 10:00 a.m.
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

April

7 - Pie, Plant and Ice Cream Sale - 9:30 a.m.
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

17-23 - National Volunteer Week
Refreshments daily

22 - Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet - 11:30 a.m.
Burgundy Basin Inn

Volunteer Opportunities

- Companion Therapy and special care companion therapy for Palliative Care Ward
- Reminder phone calls to patients for appointments at Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic
- Clerical
- Drivers
- Performance groups (musical, hobby, performance, etc)
- Laundry Assistance
- Wood Shop at 1867 Mt. Hope Ave.



Spotlight on Syracuse

Voluntary Service is now part of the Disabled Veterans Assistance Program. This initiative helps bring together veterans in need of home rehabilitation with community volunteers, tradesmen, unions, and Rebuilding Together (a non-profit agency that retrofits homes of needy individuals). VA acts as a referral agent to these entities to help veterans in need.

Voluntary Service held a golf tournament on Sept. 25 to benefit national rehabilitative events and the Combined Federal Campaign. More than \$2,000 was raised for veterans and community programs.

The Syracuse VA Medical Center received another Disabled American Veterans Volunteer Transportation Network (DAV VTN) van during the DAV national convention in August. This brings the total number of vans donated in the last year to four!

Robert Hawes, Voluntary Service Manager presented "Impact Measures for VAVS" at the national VAVS conference. This tool will allow voluntary service to be assessed on national, network, and station strategic goals and objectives.

The Transitional Care Unit (TCU) will be undergoing several changes thanks to the input and interest of our volunteer stakeholders. More than \$5,000 has been donated for changing the atmosphere in the dining/day room area to a more homelike atmosphere. Several new items will be needed to complete the project. Contact the volunteer office for details.

The American Legion, Sons of the American Legion, and the American Legion Auxiliary paid a visit to the Syracuse VA and were impressed with our efforts on behalf of the veterans we serve.





Voluntary Service is partnering with social work interns on a new program for spouses of veterans who are dying or who have died. This program will detail benefits and provide peer support. If you know someone who would benefit from this program, contact the volunteer office.

The Nurse Executive is partnering with Voluntary Service to develop a new program for incoming patients. A welcome cart will be deployed to the floors as a way of saying "hello" to new inpatients at the medical center. The cart will be staffed by a volunteer and include an assortment of supplies.

Wish List

- ☐ Items for raffles, door prizes and fund raising activities
 - ☐ New clothing (sweats, socks and underwear)
 - ☐ Winter Jackets
-

Volunteer Opportunities

-  Lobby Greeters: direct patients and visitors to clinics, patient rooms, and provide general information about the facility
-  Drivers
-  Clerical
-  Respite: visit with patients in their homes to provide "respite" for primary caregivers





Spotlight on Western NY

Annual Volunteer Recognition

The VA Western New York Healthcare System will once again recognize the volunteers at the Batavia and Buffalo sites. Formal recognition is provided throughout National Volunteer Week that is April 17 - 23 this year. Both facilities will greet regularly scheduled volunteers with morning refreshments, a

(continued on next page)

CALENDAR CORNER

February

6 - 4 Chaplains Service - 1:00 p.m.

Buffalo, Room 301

9 - VAVS Meeting - 1:30 p.m.

Batavia, Auditorium

11 - National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans - 1:00 p.m.

Buffalo, Room 301

14 - National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans - 1:00 p.m.

Batavia, Recreation Hall

17 - Diabetes Fair - 10:00 a.m.

Buffalo, Room 301

March

16 - VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:30 p.m.

Buffalo, Room 301

16 - Veterans Service Officers Meeting - 10:00 a.m.

Batavia, Auditorium

23 - Blood Drive - 8:30 a.m.

Buffalo, Room 301

April

9 - National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day - 9:00 a.m.

Buffalo, Room 301

17-23 - National Volunteer Week - Volunteer Appreciation (Batavia/Buffalo)

Daily refreshments and gift distribution

18 - Volunteer Recognition Ceremony - 6:30 p.m.

Batavia Holiday Inn, Crystal Room

28 - Take Your Children to Work Day (Batavia/Buffalo)

All day event for children 14 and older

Volunteer Opportunities

- ☎ Clerical - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☎ Computer Assistant: assist residents with computer skills - Batavia
- ☎ Drivers - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☎ Drink Cart: serve coffee/cold drinks to residents in their rooms - Batavia
- ☎ Greeters - Buffalo
- ☎ Patient/Ward Visitation(s) - Buffalo
- ☎ Patient Escort/Transport Service: assist veterans to and from scheduled appointments, etc. - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☎ Woodworking at partial hospitalization program (Main and Hertel site) - Buffalo
- ☎ Pharmacy: clerical duties, as well as assist in transporting various items when necessary throughout facility - Buffalo
- ☎ Recreational Aide: assist with/organize activities with residents - Batavia

Wish List

- ☐ Funding for patient activities - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☐ Stair climber - Batavia
- ☐ Treadmills - Buffalo
- ☐ Coffee Cart Program - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☐ 9" color televisions - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☐ Comping coupons - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☐ Welcome kits and comfort items - Buffalo





WNY Annual Volunteer Recognition (continued)

commemorative gift, as well as a warm "thank you" from many of the VA employees.

In Batavia, a Volunteer Recognition Dinner will take place on Monday, April 18 at the Holiday Inn. Top recipients will be: **Maryanna Sitzlow, Dean Weaver, Emerson Campbell, and Ruth Cobb** who collectively account for more than 73,000 hours of assistance to the volunteer program.

The Buffalo Volunteer Recognition Ceremony will take place Wednesday, May 18 at the Hearthstone Manor in Depew. Top volunteer recipients will be: **Edwin Mills, Kenneth Blum, Jack Debus and Fred Finizio** who (together) have more than 60,000 volunteer hours.

Overall, approximately 1,053 volunteers contributed more than 157,000 volunteer hours to the veterans of Western New York. Donations this year, accounted for approximately \$340,000 in cash, equipment, materials and parties.



Volunteer, Walter Kwasniewski (left), receives a silver tray from Medical Center Director, Michael S. Finegan (right) at the 2004 Volunteer Recognition Ceremony.

Having Fun Away From Home - a Father and Son Duo*

The National Veterans Golden Age Games are all about making new memories and sharing new experiences. Nothing could be more exciting than sharing those experiences with the ones closest to you. **Bob Darch** and his son **Ken Darch** are living example of this. The father son duo is full of smiles and laughter as they cheer on their buddies and fellow teammates.

Ken Darch works with the VA Healthcare System at Batavia, as a Recreation Therapist. He takes care of about 200 outpatients helping them live their life to the fullest. For six years, he has been bringing patients from the clinic to the games.

"It helps give Batavia national exposure," Ken says and every year the Batavia team has quite a performance. For the last two years, his father, Bob, has joined the team. Bob served in the navy and now participates in golf and table tennis.

"When I was young he (Bob) watched and coached me, now I watch and coach him. We have gone full circle," Ken laughed.

They share in all the joy and challenges of being at the Games, including a trip that lasted 22 hours to get across the country to Fresno. Despite the long trip, Bob says, "There is nobody I would rather pal around with then my son!"

**This article originally ran Wednesday, July 21, 2004 as part of the daily FRESNotes (the National Golden Age Games publication)*



Buffalo Employees Host Annual Event For Veterans

The fourth annual Employee Committee Thanksgiving Day Dinner was held Thursday, November 21 with the help of 80 staff members who served a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. Each year, the food court area of the Medical Center plays host to nearly 150 homeless/needy veterans and their families invited to attend this event.

The idea originated by Human Resources Specialist, **Judy Kaczmarek** who volunteered at a similar event in the community, knew it was time for us to host our own. The program has gained momentum and support from the Homeless Veterans Program, Nutrition and Food Service, Business Office, Canteen Service, DAV Volunteer Transportation Network, Engineering Service, Environmental Management Service, Police and Security Service, Public Affairs Office, Veteran Service Organizations/community groups, the Volunteer Program Office, as well as many other employees throughout the facility.



Reaching Us Is Easy

VA Medical Centers:

Albany

113 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12208
(518) 626-5000

Batavia

222 Richmond Avenue
Batavia, NY 14020
(585) 343-7500

Bath

76 Veterans Avenue
Bath, NY 14810
(607) 664-4000

Buffalo

3495 Bailey Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14215
(716) 834-9200

Canandaigua

400 Fort Hill Avenue
Canandaigua, NY 14424
(585) 394-2000

Syracuse

800 Irving Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210
(315) 425-4400

Community-Based Outpatient Clinics:

Auburn

Auburn Memorial Hospital
17 Lansing St.
Auburn, NY 13021
(315) 255-7002

Bainbridge

109 North Main Street
Bainbridge, NY 13733
(607) 967-8590

Binghamton

425 Robinson Street
Binghamton, NY 13001
(607) 772-9100

Carthage

3 Bridge Street
Carthage, NY 13619
(315) 493-4180

Catskill

Greene Medical Bldg.
159 Jefferson Heights
Catskill, NY 12414
(518) 943-7515

Clifton Park

1673 Route 9
Clifton Park, NY 12065
(518) 383-8506

Cortland

1129 Commons Avenue
Cortland, NY 13045
(607) 662-1517

Dunkirk

The Resource Center
325 Central Avenue
Dunkirk, NY 14048
(716) 366-2122

Elizabethtown

P.O. Box 277, Park St.
Elizabethtown, NY 12932
(518) 873-3295

Elmira

Health Services Bldg.
200 Madison Ave.
Suite 2E
Elmira, NY 14901
(877) 845-3247

Fonda

Camp Mohawk Plaza
Rt. 30A
Fonda, NY 12068
(518) 853-1247

Glens Falls

84 Broad Street
Glens Falls, NY 12801
(518) 798-6066

Ithaca

10 Arrowwood Drive
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-4680

Jamestown

The Resource Center
890 East Second Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
(716) 661-1447

Kingston

63 Hurley Avenue
Kingston, NY 12401
(845) 331-8322

Lackawanna

Our Lady of Victory
Family Care Center
227 Ridge Road
Lackawanna, NY 14218
(716) 822-5944

Lockport

Ambulatory Care Center
5875 S. Transit Road
Lockport, NY 14094
(716) 433-2025

Malone

183 Park Street, Suite 3
Malone, NY 12953
(518) 481-2545

Massena

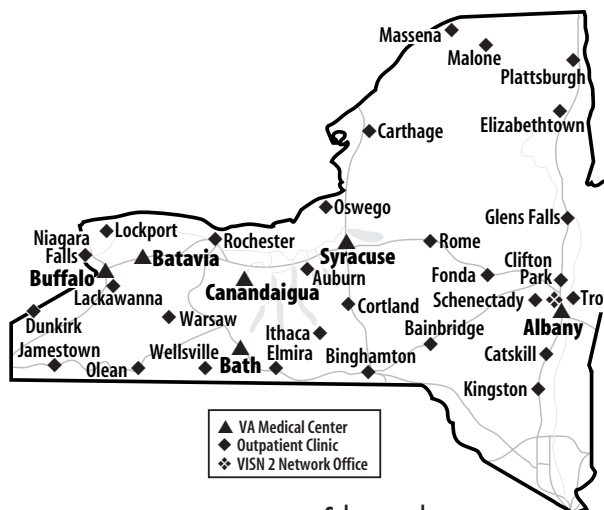
1 Hospital Drive
Massena, NY 13662
(315) 769-4253

Niagara Falls

2201 Pine Avenue
Niagara Falls, NY 14301
1-(800) 223-4810

Olean

465 North Union Street
Olean, NY 14760
(716) 373-7709



Oswego

Seneca Hills Health
Services Center
County Route 45A
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-0925

Plattsburgh

43 Durkee Street
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
(518) 561-8310

Rochester

465 Westfall Road
Rochester, NY 14620
(585) 463-2600

Rome

125 Brookley Road
Bldg. 510
Rome, NY 13441
(315) 334-7100

Schenectady

1322 Gerling St. Sheridan Plaza
Schenectady, NY 12308
(518) 346-3334

Troy

295 River Street
Troy, NY 12180
(518) 274-7707

Warsaw

Wyoming County
Community Hospital
400 N. Main Street
Warsaw, NY 14569
(585) 344-3355

Wellsville

Jones Memorial Hospital Health
Care Center
13 Loder Street
Wellsville, NY 14895
(585) 596-2056

VA Health Care On The Web

www.va.gov/visns/visn02

For Reliable Health Information On The Web

www.myhealth.va.gov

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